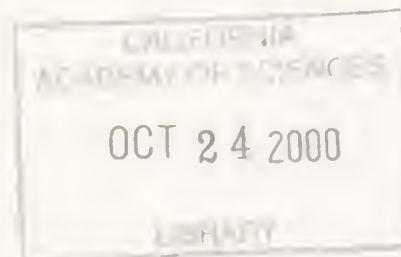


The Gull



Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 14 No. 9 October 2000

Conservation News

By Arthur Feinstein, Executive Director

There's never really enough time to sit down and tell you all that GGAS is doing in the conservation world, but we sure are active. By the way, if any one of you is interested in writing conservation articles for the Gull, please give me a call at 510/843-2222.

Alameda

Success! The final tally isn't in yet (as of

August 31), but it sure looks like our Least Terns had a good nesting season in 2000 at the soon-to-be Alameda National Wildlife Refuge. More than 250 nests were identified, and evidently many fledglings survived the breeding season and are now beginning their adult lives. GGAS played a big role in making this possible. The 1999 nesting season was plagued by human intrusion into the nesting area, and the nesting season was a disaster. Thanks to our strenuous calls for better protection (and a gentle threat of litigation) the US Navy and the US Fish and Wildlife Service installed an adequate fence that provided much better protection for the Least Terns. Many thanks also to the Alameda Police Department for increasing their vigilance on intrusions into the Refuge.

The Navy again provided the money for predator control and for monitoring of the colony, and we are grateful to them for helping to make this season a success.

Our volunteers did their part by clearing many debris boxes full of weeds from around the nesting site. These weeds provide cover and perching for raptor predators, and weeding is essential if the terns are to survive. Thanks to all of our volunteers for their very effective work. If you want to take part in this most rewarding of volunteer efforts, please call our GGAS office.

Oakland

While trying to remove an abandoned boat from the Oakland Estuary, the Port of Oakland broke up the boat and released a bunch of diesel oil into Clinton Basin. This part of the Oakland Estuary is home to the rare Barrow's Goldeneye and to many other

Alameda County Vote Yes on D and No on C

—By Dick Schneider

Alameda County's open spaces and wildlife habitats are vanishing at an alarming rate—replaced by strip malls, parking lots, and suburban sprawl. Air pollution and traffic congestion steadily worsen as more and more people are forced into their cars to drive ever greater distances. This November 7, voters can do something about it.

Measure D on the Alameda County election ballot is an urban growth boundary initiative. It would curb sprawl by establishing an urban limit line in eastern Alameda County around the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. Outside the boundary, rural zoning would be preserved. No more approvals by the Board of Supervisors for vast subdivisions on farmland and hillsides outside of existing cities. The boundary could be changed only by a vote of the people. The measure also applies to the undeveloped ridges and canyonlands east of Castro Valley, Hayward, Union City, and Fremont.

Measure D was placed on the ballot by 65,000 Alameda County residents. It is endorsed by all major Bay Area environmental groups, including Golden Gate Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Greenbelt Alliance, Preserve Area Ridgeland

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Field Trips Calendar

Sunday October 3, STRYBING ARBORETUM, SF.

Meet at 8 am at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave and Lincoln Way). See September Gull for details. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Saturday October 7, HAWK HILL, Marin County.

Meet at 10 am at the middle platform of Hawk Hill (Battery 129) Marin Headlands. See September Gull for details. Leader: Stefanie Arthur (415) 587-9282.

Wednesday, October 11, EAST BAY SHORELINE, Alameda County.

Meet at 9:30 am next to the Seabreeze Market, Interstate 80 and University in Berkeley. See September Gull for details. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Saturday, October 21, POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Drakes Monument at Drakes Beach. We will be looking for late migrants. The trip will continue as long as we are seeing birds. Bring water, lunch and warm and wet weather gear. Leader: Hugh Cotter. (415) 931-7736

Saturday, October 21, CRAB COVE, Alameda.

Meet at 9 am at the end of McKay Ave in Alameda. Take Webster through the Posey Tube. Turn right on Central, go 1 block, and left on McKay. We will be looking at shorebirds, ducks, gulls, and perhaps an

interesting raptor or 2. Beginners welcome on this 3-hour trip. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Anthony Fisher (510) 658-8769, Loveisant@aol.com.

Sunday October 22, LAS GALLINAS SEWAGE TREATMENT PONDS, Marin County.

Meet at 9:30 am. Take 101 north and exit at Lucas Valley Dr/Smith Ranch Rd. Go east on Smith Ranch Rd, turn left just before the county park, and proceed to the entrance, where parking is available. We will begin this trip by birding the road before the parking lot. We should see a variety of wintering shorebirds and waterfowl on this joint GGAS and Sierra Club trip. Bring water and snacks. Trip will end by 1 pm. Beginners welcome. Rain cancels. Leader: Jeffrey Black (510) 526-7068. (*)

Saturday, October 28, 13TH ANNUAL POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE ALL-DAY BIRDING BLITZ

(Joint activity: GGAS & National Park Service.) Meet at 8 am at Five Brooks Trailhead parking lot (about 3.5 mi south of Olema on Hwy 1). This fast paced multihabitat trip covers the Five Brooks Pond area, Limantour Spit, Drakes Beach, Chimney Rock, and Point Reyes, ending at Bear Valley and producing about 100 species. Bring food, water, and layered clothing for variable weather. Leaders: Leon Abrams (415) 453-9980 (work), (510) 843-4107 (home); and Cathy Purchis (510) 865-9482. (*)

Sunday, November 3, STRYBING ARBORETUM, SF.

Meet at 8 am at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave and Lincoln Way) for this regular first-Sunday-of-the-month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "microhabitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Wednesday, November 8, AQUATIC PARK, BERKELEY, and other nearby areas. Meet at 9:30 am in the NW corner of the parking lot of the former Spenger's Restaurant (4th and Hearst Sts) to carpool. We should see returning shorebirds and migratory ducks. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Beginners welcome. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Plan ahead: Sunday November 19, Biking and Birding Marin. Jeff Black.

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites that require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (*).

Problems, etc: If you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, call Anthony Fisher, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 658-8769. Loveisant@aol.com.

Bonaparte's Victories

By Harry Fuller

The bouncy little Bonaparte's Gull that is seen along the California coast in the fall and winter was not named for Napoleon Bonaparte, the Emperor and general. It was named for one of his nephews, Charles Lucien Bonaparte (1803–1857). The name was given to the gull by William Swainson and John Richardson, leading British scientists.

This Bonaparte was not a military man but an energetic and accomplished naturalist. This "birdy" Bonaparte was the son of Lucien Bonaparte, who had disagreed with his powerful brother, Napoleon, and fled France with his family. Charles was raised in Italy and spoke Italian, French, and English. In addition, he was adept at reading Latin, useful in his scientific pursuits. Charles Bonaparte's interest in birds was lifelong. Swainson, a superb ornithologist himself, described Bonaparte as "destined by nature to confer unperishable benefits on this noble science."

He arrived in America in 1823 at age 20, having already discovered a new species of European warbler, the Moustached, in the countryside near Rome. On the boat trip to America, Bonaparte noticed 2 storm-petrel species: Leach's and 1 that had been unnoticed by previous naturalists. He shot several, and in 1824 Bonaparte presented his first scientific paper before the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. He named the new storm-petrel after America's greatest ornithologist to that point, Alexander Wilson. Bonaparte's pedigree and his impressive knowledge quickly made him accepted among Philadelphia's scientific elite.

A contemporary remarked that the energetic, smart, and opinionated Bonaparte cut a wide swath: "He appeared to make warm friends and equally warm enemies."

Bonaparte was determined to conquer American ornithology and set about updating Wilson's *American Ornithology*, which had become outdated in the decade since Wilson's death. Bonaparte was very much a museum scientist and depended heavily on others' collections and field knowledge. Among those who helped and encouraged him were Thomas Say, William Cooper, and George Ord. Say even helped edit the text so that the

English would read smoothly. Also, Bonaparte first described several new species collected by Say and Titian Peale on Major Long's 1819 expedition to the Rocky Mountains. It was Bonaparte who named the new phoebe after his friend, Say. He also named the new genus, *Sayornis*.

In 1824 Bonaparte played a central role in the first major controversy of American ornithology. He met and admired the paintings of John James Audubon, a still-unpublished and unknown artist. Bonaparte then tried to get Audubon, a fellow French citizen, accepted by the Academy of Natural Sciences. However, the influential George Ord took a strong dislike to the backwoods upstart, who now threatened to replace Ord's dead friend Wilson as the leading American bird artist. Ord all but banished Audubon from the Academy and its collections. Bonaparte was powerless to help.

The updated *American Ornithology* by Wilson and Bonaparte appeared in 4 volumes from 1825 to 1833, contemporary with Audubon's first publications. In his work on American birds, Bonaparte identified 20 new species, including Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Say's Phoebe, Sage Grouse, Swainson's Hawk, Brown Creeper, Scott's Oriole, and Semipalmated Plover. After 1828, Charles Bonaparte returned to Europe and all but abandoned his American interests, focusing on other parts of the globe. Late in his life, he got involved in the pro-nationalist movement in Italy and was banished by his own conservative cousin, Louis Napoleon.

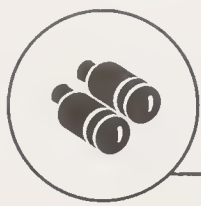
In addition to his own name, Bonaparte left another important bird name: *Zenaida*, the genus of dove that includes our Mourning Dove. The genus was named for Bonaparte's cousin, wife, and mother of his 11 children: Zenaide Laetitia Julie Bonaparte. She was living in New Jersey with her exiled father, Joseph, when she accepted the arranged marriage with cousin Charles. It was for Zenaide that he first came to the United States.

Bonaparte's final great work was going to be a complete catalogue of all known bird species. His first volume appeared in 1850, but he died before the work neared completion.

Christmas Bird Count Dates Mark your calendars now!

Oakland Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 17;
the San Francisco Count will be held on Thursday, December 28th!

Details will be in next month's *Gull*.



Orioles

If you're a bird watcher, no doubt you remember the first time you saw a "new" bird. Some birders keep lists, and others do not. Out of curiosity, I keep a list of new birds seen in my yard, seen anywhere in California, and while on a trip.

My yard list is now up to 71 species with the addition of a Hooded Oriole. I had seen Hooded Orioles before—in Mexico and on Mines Road in Livermore—but never in any of my yards. I tried not to shriek as one landed on a seed feeder (not to his taste) and then checked out the hummingbird feeder (too small for his beak). The gorgeous male then flew to the top of the fountain and dipped his toes into the bubbler before flitting to a low branch. With excitement, I alerted my husband, Dick. The bird cooperated by reappearing and taking a leisurely bath in the birdbath. As he dried off, he posed on a metal sculpture of a sunflower, and then he was gone. Despite my hopes, he did not reappear.

I called the owner of the bird store where I buy seed to share my thrill. We have a running joke that the oriole feeder I'd bought had yielded no orioles in 2 years. The owner, Joanie, helps feed and care for orphan baby birds for the Lindsay Wildlife Museum, so she often notices seasonal differences in different species. Last year the swallow nestlings she raised were born so late that she had to keep them through the winter. They would not have been able to make the migration south.

Joanie related that many of her customers who regularly have orioles at their feeders found that this year

they were very late in arriving from their winter territories, Mexico. Also late in appearing and scarce this year are swallows. One theory is that our cool summer has produced fewer insects. This is good for humans but bad for some animals and birds. Insects are a large part of orioles', swallows', and other species' diet. Both Bullock's (formerly Northern) and Hooded orioles usually nest, breed, and rear their young here, but perhaps they stayed in southern California for that cycle. They seem to be appearing randomly in northern California, much later than usual. Because they don't appear to be staying in one yard for raising a family, they just "pop up" here and there as they search for food. I was thrilled that I was looking at the right time! We know that in birding, as in life, timing is everything. A little bit of luck helps, too!

Now I needed to know more about this Hooded Oriole because I have not had the opportunity to observe them up close and personal. My books told me that they belong to the large troupial family that comprises 22 species in North America. They are a diverse group in terms of color, size, and habits. The best-known troupials are blackbirds, grackles, and cowbirds. Then there are orioles and meadowlarks, all colorful and beautiful birds. We might see both Hooded and Bullock's orioles in our yards. Who would guess blackbirds, etc. were cousins? The Bullock's and Baltimore orioles were once lumped together as "Northern Orioles" despite different markings. Bullock's Orioles' breeding range is in the western states whereas Baltimore

Orioles are found in the East. In the middle, where their ranges merge, they may interbreed. Imagine trying to nail down the offspring of this union! Very confusing, I imagine. So, stay on your toes!

Bullock's and Hooded orioles enjoy similar diets, largely insects and caterpillars. They love nectar but are "illegitimate" visitors to flowers because to obtain nectar, they pierce the base of a flower without pollinating it. The 2 species differ in their habitat preferences, with Hooded Oriole preferring palm groves, mesquite, arid scrub, and riparian and deciduous woodlands around human habitation. The Northern Oriole prefers open areas with scattered trees or open riparian woodland. Both appreciate human handouts such as hummingbird food or bread, cake, and fresh or dried fruit.

For some reason, Bullock's Orioles' behavior is the least studied of our birds. We do know that from the moment they arrive on their breeding grounds in April or May, they fill the air with song, the males competing for rather small territories. Once the females arrive, they also compete with each other and join in the concert. Courtship involves some bobbing and wing-drooping. A short, soft upward-slurred whistle keeps the pair in contact.

The nests of Bullock's Orioles are lovely oval bags, 6 inches deep, woven of plant fibers and lined with mosses. The female is the builder and hangs the nest 6 to 15 feet high or even up to 60 feet where it is usually suspended from the tip of a tree branch. Deciduous trees are preferred, and because of the scarcity of

sites, several nests may be found in the same tree. These nests are lined with mosses and other soft materials; imagine how snug the young feel as they are gently rocked in this cradle. The birds enter a hole near the top of the nest. The 4 to 5 youngsters fledge 12 to 14 days after hatching. Bullock's Orioles have only 1 brood a year whereas the Hooded Oriole has 2 or even 3 slightly smaller-sized families. The Hooded Oriole builds a thin-walled, cuplike nest sewn to palmetto leaves with plant fibers. Or the nest could be in a mistletoe clump or hung from the branch of a tree with the entrance hole on the side. The Hooded Orioles' range has extended northward as we have planted more palms and flowering ornamentals.

We have many lovely birds in our

region, but without Painted Buntings or some of the spectacular birds seen in the tropics or in Africa, I'm sure you agree that orioles are breathtakingly beautiful. I'll take 1 any day. They are a true feast for the eyes. Meanwhile, I'm still hungry!

Donations

Least Tern (\$200 or more)

Harold Kirker

Clapper Rail (\$100 - \$199)

Skip Augur; Janice M. Brooks, with matching gift from Raychem; Carol Kern; Renee Margolin; Mary and Robert Mayer; Cynthia Naton; Audre and Rofer Newman; Diane Scarritt; Gil Thomson

Gifts (to \$99)


Steve Granholm, Barbara and George Martin, Margaret and Winton McKibben in honor of Mary Ellen McKey's 60th birthday, B. W. Tobey

Bird Box

Madelon and Gerald Halpern, Courtenay Peddle

A bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society helps make it possible for us to continue the good work we do in helping to preserve our natural world for future generations. If you are interested in setting up a bequest we have a team of experts who will be glad to help you. Please call Arthur Feinstein at our GGAS Office for more information. Our phone number is 510-843-2222. Thanks.

Once Again, We Need Your Help

ur new President of Golden Gate Audubon is Leslie Lethridge and it's wonderful to have her as President. BUT, Leslie was our Recording Secretary and now we don't have one. We desperately need a volunteer to take on the task of taking the Minutes of our Board Meetings. That is basically all the job calls for, but it sure is an important one.

Please consider joining our GGAS Board as our Recording Secretary. Being on the GGAS Board is rewarding and fun, too. If you are interested please call the GGAS office at 510-843-2222. Thanks, again.

Our wonderful Program Chairwoman Carol Kern has had give up her position and we are in great need of a new Program Chair. Please think about volunteering for this position. All it takes to do the job is an interest in birds and natural history and some time for telephone calling to find the presenters.

What does it mean to be Program Chair? First of all,

it's fun. You meet interesting people. You get to see the shows you have always wanted to see since you get to choose them. Our Program Chair chooses the topics and makes the arrangements for the eight nature programs we present each year (the third Thursday of the month for the months of September through November and January through May).

Have you always wanted to see a program on birding Australia, perhaps you're interested in the birds of Costa Rica? Here's your chance to make it happen.

The job mostly entails calling or emailing people to find appropriate speakers. You get to talk to and meet a lot of interesting people and it doesn't take too much time and these programs provide a real service to our membership.

If you are interested, please give the GGAS office a call at 510-843-2222. Thanks

GGAS Web Site

In case you haven't noticed, the GGAS Web site is now current and creatively redesigned thanks to the work and diligence of GGAS Webmaster Mark Eaton. If you haven't visited the Web site recently you might take a look. Also the URL has changed to www.goldengateaudubon.org and Mark's newish email is mweaton@pacbell.net.

Mark has a great birding Web site, "San Francisco Birding and Beyond" (home.pacbell.net/mweaton) You might check it out. Among other things it includes links to other bird sites, a San Francisco checklist, and a list of San Francisco birding spots.

Another great "local" Web site is Joe Morlan's California Birding Pages (<http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~jmorlan/index.htm>). One of the great things I like about his site is the California County Birding Pages. For example, if you are planning a trip, to Mt. Lassen, you would go to his site and through County Birding click on Shasta and Lassen counties. Here you will find a large list of linked birding spots as well as other relevant birding links for the area you are planning to visit.

If you have a special Web site you would like to share with GULL readers please send the information, with review, if you like, to me at ggas_gull@yahoo.com.

Peter Caldwell
Editor



Join the GGAS Conservation List



Want to keep informed on important environmental issues? Want to share an environmental concern with others? Need some help or input on an important environmental issue? Need environmentalists to attend an important meeting? Want to tell others about the great bird you just saw, or in that some case, did not see?

If you answered yes to any of these questions GGAS has the answer for you.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society recently established an email discussion group for conservation issues. Through this system you can as GGAS members discuss any and all conservation issues relevant to GGAS and interact with all other members of the discussion group in a timely manner.

Some recent issues addressed through the GGAS Conservation List included the quail problem at Golden Gate Park, development at Harding Park, Watch List for birds in trouble in the area, bird citing, alerts to attend important meetings, protection for the Bank Swallows at Ft Funston, nesting Western Grebes in San Francisco, information on the "new" GGAS Web site, a New York Times article on proposed rules to protect wetlands, heron research at Audubon Canyon Ranch, and on and on. You get the idea.

We welcome you to get involved now with our list. You will be able to send messages to all that subscribe and will receive all messages that are generated through the list.

To subscribe, send a message to: LISTSERV@LIST.AUDUBON.ORG; leave the subject line blank, and in the body of your message, write: SUB CA-GGAS-Conservation. After joining you will receive a WELCOME message, along with a command reference guide for your use.

For more information about lists maintained by National Audubon and LISERV visit <http://www.audubon.org/net/list>.



Yes on D... Continued from page 1

Committee, Urban Ecology, Alameda Creek Alliance, Berkeley Ecology Center, and many more. It is supported by Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, Berkeley Mayor Shirley Dean, and Pleasanton Mayor Ben Tarver, among other elected officials.

Unfortunately, a major threat to Measure D exists. The Tri-Valley Business Council wrote a deceptive counter-proposal that was placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors as Measure C. Cloaked in fine-sounding language, Measure C leaves the Supervisors in charge of all development decisions. Measure C is bankrolled by big developers and land speculators who care about their financial interest, not about protecting our environment.

To protect open space, wildlife habitat, and the natural beauty of Alameda County for future generations, vote **Yes** on Measure D, **No** on C. For more information or to help in the campaign, contact Mike Daley at the Sierra Club (510) 848-0800.

Visit www.citizens4openspace.org.



The sky grew dark with waterfowl

So almon so abundant you could cross streams on their backs
This is how early settlers described the ecological richness of the Bay Area. Those days will never be seen again but, thanks to a visionary plan released by a consortium of resource agencies in June 1999, we can dream of one day seeing San Francisco Bay restored to natural glory.

In 1988, San Francisco Bay was the subject of a 5-year long effort to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) under the federal National Estuary Program. Many Audubon Chapters including ours took part in that process. At the end a CCMP was completed and adopted. Included in that CCMP was a directive that a Regional Wetlands Management Plan should be created.

The U.S. EPA and our state Regional Water Quality Control Board decided to implement this directive and realized that before you create a plan you have to know what your goals are. And so they created a process to develop goals for wetland restoration in the Bay Area. They put out the word and over 100 scientists volunteered their time to develop a vision for wetlands in the Bay Area. The vision was based on 125 wetland-related species: plants, invertebrates, reptiles, fish, mammals and birds.

The charge for these groups was to develop goals for wetlands in the Bay Area that would ensure the survival of all 125 species including threatened and endangered species.

After three years of truly intensive effort the final product, called the *Baylands Ecosystem Goals* was released. All of those involved in the project deserve an enormous round of applause for the literally thousands of volunteer hours dedicated to this effort.

The Goals would see a restoration of 60,000 of tidal wetlands around the Bay, South Bay, and San Pablo Bay and in Suisun. It would see another 100,000 acres either restored

to seasonal wetlands or, if already seasonal wetlands or salt ponds, managed for wildlife.

It is visionary, it is exciting, it will change the face of the Bay and once again make it a visible source of life and fecundity. It must be implemented!

And it will be. With encouragement from all eight Bay Area Audubon Chapters, the National Audubon Society along with its state office, Audubon-California, has made the implementation of the Baylands Goals both a state and national priority. In fact, National Audubon's President, John Flicker had an editorial in the latest issue of *Audubon Magazine* that was all about fulfilling the Baylands Goals.

In the Spring, we had a wonderful visit by John Flicker to announce Audubon's decision to create a campaign to implement the Baylands Goals and he was on all of the Bay Area's major TV stations and in all of our major newspapers.

The Audubon Baylands Goals campaign is now off and running. With funding from the eight Bay Area Audubon chapters, from Audubon-California and particularly from the Packard Foundation we have been able to hire a Program Director, Debbie Drake, who previously was instrumental in pushing forward the Florida Everglades restoration campaign. Also working on the Goals is Program Coordinator Mike Sellors, a wonderfully able lawyer and advocate. We hope to have even more staffing in the near future and to move forward in creating community support around the Bay for implementing the Baylands Goals.

One of first goals is to have our local Bay Area communities, cities, towns and counties, sign on to resolutions supporting the Baylands Goals. With hard work and with all of your help, we will bring back to San Francisco Bay its wetlands and its wildlife. If you want to join in the fun please call Mike Sellors at 415-388-2055.

Another Way to Help

Another way of helping Golden Gate Audubon Society in our efforts to preserve our natural world is to help ensure that we have sufficient financial resources in the future to continue our good work. Please consider placing a charitable bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society in your will or living trust. There are significant tax advantages that may be available by making a bequest to a nonprofit organization such as Golden Gate Audubon Society.

The following is suggested wording for making such a bequest. Please feel free to share this information with your estate advisor.

"I hereby give and bequeath to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc, in Berkeley, California, the amount

of _____
(state dollar amount of gift or percent of estate)

to be used exclusively to fund the Golden Gate Audubon Society's efforts. Golden Gate Audubon Tax ID # 94-6086896."

If you have any questions or would like to discuss a possible gift through a bequest or charitable trust, please call Executive Director Arthur Feinstein at 510/845-2222. We have a team of volunteer experts in this field who can advise you on the best course for you.

We hope this is of interest to those of our members who are contemplating the future and who hope to give our natural world a little bit of help. Thanks.



July 8–August 29, 2000

The period was remarkable for several real rarities among pelagic species. The fall movement of sandpiper species along the coast began in earnest, but unusual wood warbler sightings were indeed few.

Albatross to Boobies

The most exciting albatross species was a probable **Salvin's Albatross** (*Thalassarche cauta salvini*) that was seen twice and photographed on a pelagic trip in Marin County waters July 29 (DLSh). This species is regarded here as a subspecies of the **Shy Albatross**, an Australasian breeder (Harris, 1985), and is given full species status by Southern Hemisphere ornithologists. The July 29 observation is a possible 1st North American record for the subspecies. Sightings of the closely related Shy Albatross were most recently made in August, September, and October 1999 in Mendocino County waters. Only 1 Laysan Albatross, found on a Santa Cruz pelagic trip on July 25, was reported during the period (DLSh), whereas at least 400 Black-footed Albatross were sighted, with high counts of 94 on a July 7 Monterey Bay trip (DLSh), and 100 on a July 15 pelagic trip to the Cordell Bank, SON (RS). Twelve Northern Fulmars, not numerous in the summer, were found on the July 7 Monterey Bay trip (DLSh).

A **Dark-rumped Petrel** (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*) was well seen and photographed 27 miles west of the tip of Point Reyes on a July 15 pelagic trip to the Cordell Banks (RS). If accepted, this sighting would be a 7th record for nearshore North America. This bird was formerly

known as the Hawaiian Petrel and normally resides in the tropical Pacific, breeding in Hawaii and also in the Galapagos (Harrison, 1985). A video of this event is available on the PRBO website. On Aug 19, there was another sighting of this species, possibly the same bird, 8 mi off the Mendocino coast (DLSh). Over 200 Pink-footed Shearwaters were seen during the period, with a high count of 60 on an Aug 5 Monterey Bay trip (DS), whereas the only Flesh-footed Shearwater report was 1 seen on a Santa Cruz pelagic trip July 25 (DLSh). Two Wilson's Storm-Petrels were reported, 1 on the Aug 5 Monterey trip (DS) and another the next day on a Santa Cruz pelagic (DS). What may possibly represent a first North American record of **Markham's Storm-Petrel** (*Oceanodroma markhami*) was the bird seen 28 mi W of Fort Bragg on Aug 19 (DLSh). This storm-petrel is normally found off NW South America and W Central America (Harrison, 1985) and is difficult to separate in the field from the Black Storm-Petrel. The records will be submitted to the California Bird Records Committee for consideration.

A **Brown Booby** (*Sula leucogaster*) was reported from a fishing boat off Pt Lobos, MTY, Aug 12 (MPRBA). Unusual near the coast in summer were 110 American White Pelicans at Corte Madera Marsh, MRN, July 10 (CL), whereas 4 Brown Pelicans circling over Pinto Lake, SCZ, Aug 4 (DSu) were an uncommon sight inland for that county. Two Little Blue Herons were at the Alviso Salt Ponds, SCL, July 11 (BR), and 1 remained through Aug 6 (MR). Another Little Blue Heron was found July 19–21, near Nicholas Rd, SUT (JS, JL).

Condors to Puffins

Four of the released California Condors were seen fending for themselves, feeding on a seal carcass on the Big Sur Coast, MTY, July 16 (MPRBA). A Greater White-fronted Goose was at Limantour Beach, PRNS, MRN, Aug 16 (JBe). A first nesting record for Contra Costa County (and 4th new county nesting record for this year) were Green-winged Teal with 3 offspring at McNabney Marsh, CC, Aug 3 (SG). The male Harlequin Duck residing for years on Brooks Island, CC, was seen Aug 13–25 (SG, MF). Three Long-tailed Ducks (aka Oldsquaws) were near Brooks Island Aug 13 (SG). The Rough-legged Hawk seen Aug 15 at Scott Creek Pond, SCZ, may be the earliest coastal record (MB). Single Pacific Golden-Plovers were found at the Farallones, SF, July 13–15 (PRBO); at Ukiah Sewage Ponds, MEN, July 22 (GC); and near Hwy 1, Marina, MTY, Aug 20 (MPRBA). There was a **Eurasian Dotterel** (*Charadrius morinellus*) on the Farallones, Aug 22 (PRBO). This member of the family Charadriidae (lapwings, plovers) is an extremely rare fall transient, with most records from Pt Reyes and the Farallones (Small, 1994).

Four single Solitary Sandpipers were reported, from Sierra Valley, PLU, July 8 (SR); Redding Sewage Ponds, SHA, July 6–7 (JS); Bridgeport Reservoir, MON, Aug 17 (CN); and Spud Point, Bodega, SON, Aug 25, especially unusual because this species is rarely found on salt water (DS). Not commonly seen in summer was a single Red Knot at the Albany mudflats, ALA, July 10 (BF); a second individual at the Carmel River Mouth, MTY, Jul 28–31; and a third

found at the Salinas River Mouth, MTY, July 28 (MPRBA). Single Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported from Live Oak Wastewater Treatment Plant, SUT, Aug 10 (CH, EP); Calabasas Ponds, SCL, Aug 17-20 (BR, FV); and 2 were at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Aug 25 (RS, MR, MM). Another Semipalmated Sandpiper was found at Clear Lake SP, LAK, Aug 27-28, reportedly a 2nd county record (DWO). At least 10 Baird's Sandpipers were seen over Marin, Mono, Monterey, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz counties. The first Pectoral Sandpiper report of the "fall" came from the Carmel River Mouth, MTY, July 24 (MPRBA); followed by 1 at the Salinas River Mouth, Aug 17 (MPRBA); 2-3 birds at Harkins Slough, SCZ, Aug 18-21 (RW, CK); a juvenile at the mouth of Princeton Marsh, SM, Aug 20 (RSTh); 1 at the Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS), SCL, Aug 22 (BR, FV); and 5 more juveniles at the Pajaro River, SCZ, Aug 22 (DSu). Three Stilt Sandpipers were found during the period: at Crittenden Marsh, SCL, Aug 20-21 (PJM, MR); at CCFS, SCL, Aug 22 (BR, FV); and at State & Spreckels, SCL, Aug 26 (BR, MM). Single Ruffs were sighted at Pebble Beach, MTY, Aug 24-26 (MPRBA); at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Aug 25-26 (DR, RS, LH); at Crittenden Marsh, SCL, Aug 20-24 (PJM, MR, JC); and at Calabasas Ponds, SCL, Aug 20 (MM).

Pelagic outings recorded South Polar Skuas on several occasions, with 1 on a July 7 Monterey Bay trip (DLSh); 4 on a July 14 Cordell Banks, SON, trip (RS); 3 on an Aug 5 Monterey trip (DS); 3 on an Aug 6 Santa Cruz trip (DS); and 4 more on an Aug 19 Ft Bragg, MEN, trip (DLSh).

At least 24 Long-tailed Jaegers were found, with a high count of 12 on the Aug 19 Ft Bragg trip (DLSh). Single Franklin's Gulls were found at Davis Wetlands, YOL, July 21 (DSi); at the Salinas River Mouth, MTY, July 28 (MPRBA); and at Harkins Slough, SCZ, Aug 26 (MPRBA). Five juvenile Heermann's Gulls were off the nest and swimming at Roberts Lake, MTY, July 18 (MPRBA). Hurrah for the 3 Least Tern hatchlings found at the Albany mudflats, ALA, July 11-19, with 5-6 adults remaining on their nests as of July 19 and 4-5 birds still there Aug 22 (BF, HG)! This species is rarely seen over the ocean, but a single Least Tern was spotted on the Aug 5 Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip (DS).

Black Skimmers continue to spread, with 18 birds reported over Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, Marin, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Solano counties. Three reports are especially interesting. One bird found at Corte Madera Marsh, MRN (MOB) was banded as a chick in Orange County on Aug 7, 1998, according to Rich Stallcup. One pair nested at the Salinas NWR, SCZ (a 1st nesting record in the Monterey Bay area; LHe, RWa, DSu), but the nest failed due to predation in early July. There was an engrossing account of a Black Skimmer at Elkhorn Slough, MTY, being hunted and finally eaten by a Peregrine Falcon on Aug 24 (BW)! A report of a **Long-billed Murrelet** (*Brachyramphus perdix*), a bird of coastal NE Asia, came from Crescent City, DN, July 14 (EE). This species was formerly considered a race of the Marbled Murrelet, and few California records have been

Continues on page 11

Wood Warbler Sightings

Nashville Warbler

July 22	Twin Valley Rd,	DS
	LAK	

Northern Parula

July 20 (3)	BSOL, MTY	MPRBA
Aug 8	Mt Davidson, SF	PS

Chestnut-sided Warbler

Aug 10	Little Salmon Creek, MEN	DT
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Blackpoll Warbler

July 15-16	Farallones, SF	PRBO
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American Redstart

Aug 8	Stinson Beach, MRN	RS
Aug 15	"	FB
Aug 27	Carmel R mouth, MTY	MPRBA
Aug 29	West Wash, SF	KM
Aug 29	Aptos Creek Co Park, SCZ	DSu

Ovenbird

July 11	Orick, HUM	ABB
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Hooded Warbler

July 14	Holmes, HUM	ABB
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Abbreviations for Observers: ABB, Arcata Bird Box; JBe, Jack Bedine; FB, Florence Bennett; BSOL, Big Sur Ornithology Lab; WB, William Blake; JB, Jim Booker; MB, Marjorie Bourret; GC, George Chaniot; JC, Jessie Conklin; EE, Elias Elias; MF, Mike Feighner; BF, Brian Fitch; SG, Steve Glover; HG, Helen Green; CH, Cliff Hawley; LHe, Laird Henkel; LH, Lisa Hug; CK, Clay Kempf; AK, Anna Kopitov; CL, Calvin Lou; JL, John Luther; MM, Mike Mammoser; MOB, Many Observers; KM, Kevin McKereghan; PJM, Peter J. Metropulos; BM, Bob Miller; MPRBA, Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert; JM, John Moore; DM, Dan Murphy; CN, Christie Nelson; EP, Ed Pandalfino; PRBO, Point Reyes Bird Observatory; RR, Richard Redman; BR, Bob Reiling; DR, Don Reinberg; MR, Mike Rogers; SR, Steve Rovell; PS, Paul Saraceni; RSc, Rusty Scalf; BS, Bill Scoggins; MS, Michelle Scott; DS, Doug Shaw; DLSh, Debra Love Shearwater; RS, Rich Stallcup; JS, John Sterling; DSt, Dan Stoebel; DSu, David Suddjian; RSTh, Ron S. Thorn; DT, Dorothy Tobkin; FV, Frank Vanslager; BW, Brian Walton; HW, Heath Wakelee; RWa, Ricki Warriner; DW, Denise Wight; RW, Roger Wolfe; DWO, Dave Woodward.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; DN, Del Norte; HUM, Humboldt; LAK, Lake; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MON, Mono; MTY, Monterey; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; PLA, Placer; PLU, Plumas; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SUT, Sutter; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SHA, Shasta; SON, Sonoma; SUT, Sutter; YOL, Yolo.

Conservation News...

Continued from page 1

waterbirds. We notified the Regional Water Quality Control Board of the values of this part of the Estuary and asked that they impose sufficient fines so as to allow for the restoration of this site. Working with the Port of Oakland, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Baykeeper, we hope to undertake a wetland and mudflat restoration program at Clinton Basin that will make it better than ever. We also hope the entire Clinton Basin area becomes a better-than-ever habitat for our waterfowl and shorebirds. If you would like to help us work on this project, please call the GGAS office.

San Francisco

Our Save the Quail campaign is going forward with great success! The city's Board of Supervisors has adopted, and Mayor Willie Brown signed, a resolution endorsing our Save the Quail campaign. Our next effort is to start restoring California Quail habitat. If you want to get involved, please call us at the GGAS office. Look for more details in the next issue.

We are also working to restore 24 acres of historic wetlands at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area. This site, Yosemite Creek, already has mudflats and shallow water habitats and hosts thousands of shorebirds and waterfowl every year. The missing ingredient is that its historic tidal wetlands were covered over with earth many years ago. We now have the opportunity to restore these tidal wetlands back to life and, once restored, they will indeed be filled with life, from waterbirds to fish and crabs and invertebrates. If you are interested in helping with this project, please give us a call.

San Francisco Airport

As we've mentioned before, GGAS remains opposed to the expansion of runways at SFO. The airport currently

proposes to fill nearly 3 square miles of the bay. This is an outrageously large amount of fill, and we are working with other environmental organizations to either reduce or eliminate this proposal.

Sacramento

Three pieces of wildlife or wetlands legislation have passed or are likely to pass the legislature as I write this article. All 3 will soon rest on the Governor's desk for signing. GGAS played a significant role in the conception and drafting of all 3 of these bills.

One bill, carried by our own Assemblywoman Dion Aroner, would require the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to give equal weight to wildlife as to public access when approving a permit. Currently BCDC can deny a permit for a project located within the 100-ft shoreline band (100 ft above the high tide line of the Bay) only if that project does not provide adequate public access within the 100-ft shoreline band. Sometimes this has led BCDC to require public access to be placed right next to, if not on top of, sensitive wildlife habitat. The new law, if approved, would require BCDC "... when considering whether a project provides maximum feasible public access in areas of sensitive habitat ... determine whether the access is compatible with wildlife protection in the bay." This will be a major step forward in protecting our bay's wildlife and their habitat.

Another bill, this one carried by Assemblyman Ted Lempert, would have the California Department of Fish and Game keep track of Wetland Mitigation Banks. These mitigation banks are a new tool used to mitigate (compensate for) the destruction of wetlands. Environmentalists fear this tool may be used to make it easier for developers to get permits that allow them to destroy wetlands. This bill will help us keep track of the impact of mitigation banking on wetlands regulation.

The final bill, carried by San Diego Assemblywoman Susan Davis, would have the State Resources Agency undertake an inventory of all the wetlands in California and identify restoration, enhancement, and acquisition objectives for the state to improve the quality and quantity of the state's wetlands.

As you can see, a lot is happening in the GGAS world of wildlife. We need help keeping up with all of these issues. If you want to get involved, please call us or come to 1 of our Conservation committee meetings. Our East Bay Conservation Committee meets at the GGAS office, 2530 San Pablo Ave, Suite G, Berkeley, on the second Monday of every month. The San Francisco Conservation Committee meets on the first Monday of every month and is held in the homes of the committee members, so you will have to call the office to find out where the next meeting is to be held. Don't be shy. It's fun and satisfying. Join us!

News from Audubon Canyon Ranch

We have bountiful offerings this fall for you, our good friends....

Bolinas Lagoon Preserve

Under the Heronry with Ray Peterson. Saturday, October 28, 9:30 - noon. That's right, under the heronry. Our delightful former Resident Biologist will have some surprises for you. Bring your friends for this short fascinating walk. Free, but please call 415/868-9244 to register.

Fall Work Day and Free Lunch! Saturday, November 4, 9:30 am, at Picher Canyon. We need your help

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Observations ...

Continued from page 9

accepted. A Florned Puffin was seen 50–75 m off Bodega Head, SON, Aug 18–20 (RSc, MOB).

Cuckoos to Weavers

Rare on the coast, and too late for last month's column, was a Yellow-billed Cuckoo seen at Beatrice, HUM, June 26 (ABB). A Greater Roadrunner on Ida Clayton Rd, SON, Aug 6, was the first county record since 1994 (DS). The first confirmed breeding (2 chicks in the nest) of Common Poorwills for Santa Cruz County for over 100 years was discovered in the NW part of Big Basin Redwoods SP, Aug 2 (DSu). A Black-chinned Hummingbird was at Bethel Island Rd, CC, July 24 (DW), and a Costa's Hummingbird was found on Mt Davidson, SF, Aug 16–18, a first SF mainland record (PS). The earliest record for a Willow Flycatcher at the Big Sur Ornithology Lab (BSOL), MTY, was obtained Aug 23 (JB). A Least Flycatcher was found near the summit of Mt Davidson, SF, Aug 25–29 (PS, DM), and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was along Water Lane, SM, July 30 (BM). A Red-eyed Vireo

was found in Arcata, HUM, July 4 (EE); 2 first-year birds of that species were along Pescadero Creek, SM, Aug 12 (RSTh); and another was seen along Pescadero Creek, SM, Aug 19 (RSTh). Unusual in Santa Cruz County, especially for the date, was a White-breasted Nuthatch in Scotts Valley, July 11 (MB). Unusual for the location in summer was a Townsend's Solitaire on Ida Clayton Rd, SON, July 9 (DS). A Gray Catbird was in a birdbath in San Jose, SCL, Aug 24 (JM). Wood warbler rarities were few this period (see chart).

A Summer Tanager was found at the Carmel River Mouth, MTY, Aug 27–28 (MPRBA, AK). Grasshopper Sparrows were reported from 3 locations: 1 at Crane Creek Regional Park, SON, July 11 (DS); another near Half Moon Bay, SM, July 17 (MS); and 3–4 at Mill Gulch, SON, July 18 (DS). Six reports of individual Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, at least 4 of which were males, came from Humboldt, Monterey, Marin, Santa Cruz, and Sonoma counties. Sixteen or more Blue Grosbeaks were seen over Contra Costa, Colusa, Monterey, San Mateo, Shasta, and Sutter counties, with the largest group of 1 female and 6 males at Redding

Sewage Ponds, SHA, July 6–7 (JS). The immature Blue Grosbeak at Andrew Molera SP, MTY, Aug 6 (BSOL), was rare for its location in August. Individual Indigo Buntings were found at Redding Sewage Ponds, July 6–16 (JS, RR); at Muir Beach, MRN, Aug 12 (WB); and along Pescadero Creek, SM, Aug 12 (RSTh). An immature **Painted Bunting** (*Passerina ciris*) was banded at Andrew Molera SP, MTY, Aug 28 (BSOL), representing the 3rd county record. (JB). Three Great-tailed Grackles were at Patton Pond, Marina, MTY (MPRBA), and 1 was still at Roberts Lake the first week in August (MPRBA). Two reports of Baltimore Orioles were received: 1 from San Carlos, SM, July 13 (RSTh), and the other from Granite Bay, PLA, Aug 14, reportedly a 1st county record (HW). Fremont, ALA, hosted a male **Orange Bishop** (*Euplectes franciscanus*) on July 29. This bright orange-red and black weaver of the Ploceidae family and native of Africa has been widely established in the Los Angeles area (BS). There was a possible female nearby, so could the species be embarked on a northern California invasion?

News from Audubon Canyon Ranch ... *Continued from page 10*

with library work, trail work, pulling weeds, planting native flowers, or cooking lunch (we provide). Call 415/868-9244 to let us know you're coming.

Bouverie Preserve

Guided Nature Walks. October 14, November 11, December 9, January 13, January 27, February 24, March 24, April 7, April 21, May 5, May 12. 9:30 – 1:30. This is your chance to experience the beauty and rich natural history of this 500-acre preserve. Call 707/938-4554 for a lottery form, which must be returned one month prior to the walk. No charge but donations are appreciated.

Fall Work Day and Free Lunch!

Saturday, October 7, 9:30. Come help us spruce up the preserve. Call 707/938-4554 to register, so that we can plan enough food!

Trail Days. October 23, November 13, January 8, February 5, April 9, May 7. :15 – 12:30. Can you believe that our work days are so popular that we limit them to 15 participants? We do, but bring gloves, a lunch, and lots of energy to help clear trails, pull non-native plants, or work in the native plant garden. We'll provide drinks and an inside look at this beautiful place. Call 707/938-4554 to register.

Giving Thanks with our ACR Biologist Rebecca Anderson-Jones. November 18, 10:00 – 3:00. Have you

ever wondered how to express the gratitude you feel for nature? Come explore the various ways an intact ecosystem provides for our needs. This is a chance to review some basic ecological concepts, share some highlights of the preserve's fall season, and discuss the variety of ways people can show their thanks. We'll top it off by sharing our packed-in potluck and a couple of local Native American stories by the Tule House. Bring food to share, water, and something to share that expresses gratitude for nature. Fee is \$20. Call 414/868-9244 to register.



October Meeting

"Dragonflies, for a Change of Pace"

Red, green, blue, orange; striped, plaid and/or dotted—they may not be birds, but dragonflies are attracting the attention of many birders. Like birds, dragonflies come in vibrant colors, they fly, and they have interesting life histories and behaviors. And if you are a birder, you have already developed the skills for watching them!

To date, more than 60 species of dragonflies have been identified in California—more than 100, if you include the damselflies. But dragonfly studies here are in their infancy, as ornithology was a century ago. There are currently 19 species of dragonflies known to occur in San Francisco County, of which 3 have been recorded either by seeing live dragonflies in the field or by finding specimens in museum collections. Alameda County currently has

32, with only 26 of them having been known in 1997.

At our October General Meeting, Kathy Biggs, author of the new field guide for California Dragonflies, *Common Dragonflies of California, A Beginner's Pocket Guide*, will be sharing slides and tips on identifying the dazzling dragonflies and telling us about some of their interesting behaviors.

Kathy is a member of Madrone Audubon in Santa Rosa. Kathy invites us to get acquainted with this unique group of fliers—Earth's very first flying life forms—with a visit to her California Dragonfly web site: <http://www.sonic.net/dragonfly>. The new pocket guide, which is available through her web site, is now on sale at the GGAS office also and can be purchased at our meeting for \$9.25 including tax.

Thursday, October 19, 2000
7:00 pm Refreshments and Book Signing
7:30 pm Program
Josephine Randall Museum
San Francisco

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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